



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Patent and Trademark Office

NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE AND ISSUE FEE DUE

020457 TM11/0917  
ANTONELLI TERRY STOUT AND KRAUS  
SUITE 1800  
1300 NORTH SEVENTEENTH STREET  
ARLINGTON VA 22209

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	TOTAL CLAIMS	EXAMINER AND GROUP ART UNIT	DATE MAILED
09/461,432	12/16/99	032	GRAVINI, S	2162 09/10/01
First Named Applicant KATO,		35 USC 154(b) term ext. =	0 Days.	

TITLE OF  
INVENTION VACUUM PROCESSING AND OPERATING METHOD

ATTY'S DOCKET NO.	CLASS-SUBCLASS	BATCH NO.	APPLN. TYPE	SMALL ENTITY	FEES DUE	DATE DUE
3 503.30414C14	034-406.000	L72	UTILITY	NO	\$1240.00	12/10/01

**THE APPLICATION IDENTIFIED ABOVE HAS BEEN EXAMINED AND IS ALLOWED FOR ISSUANCE AS A PATENT.**  
**PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS CLOSED.**

**THE ISSUE FEE MUST BE PAID WITHIN THREE MONTHS FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS NOTICE OR THIS APPLICATION SHALL BE REGARDED AS ABANDONED. THIS STATUTORY PERIOD CANNOT BE EXTENDED.**

**HOW TO RESPOND TO THIS NOTICE:**

I. Review the SMALL ENTITY status shown above.

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as YES, verify your current SMALL ENTITY status:

- A. If the status is changed, pay twice the amount of the FEE DUE shown above and notify the Patent and Trademark Office of the change in status, or
- B. If the status is the same, pay the FEE DUE shown above.

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as NO:

- A. Pay FEE DUE shown above, or
- B. File verified statement of Small Entity Status before, or with, payment of 1/2 the FEE DUE shown above.

II. Part B-Issue Fee Transmittal should be completed and returned to the Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) with your ISSUE FEE. Even if the ISSUE FEE has already been paid by charge to deposit account, Part B Issue Fee Transmittal should be completed and returned. If you are charging the ISSUE FEE to your deposit account, section "4b" of Part B-Issue Fee Transmittal should be completed and an extra copy of the form should be submitted.

III. All communications regarding this application must give application number and batch number.

Please direct all communications prior to issuance to Box ISSUE FEE unless advised to the contrary.

**IMPORTANT REMINDER: Utility patents issuing on applications filed on or after Dec. 12, 1980 may require payment of maintenance fees. It is patentee's responsibility to ensure timely payment of maintenance fees when due.**

PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE COPY

## Notice of Allowability

Application No. 09/461,432	Applicant(s) Shigekazu KATO et al.
Examiner Stephen M. Gravini	Art Unit 2162

--The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance and Issue Fee Due or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1.  This communication is responsive to papers filed through May 8, 2001.
2.  The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-32.
3.  The drawings filed on Dec 16, 1999 are acceptable as formal drawings.
4.  Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).
  - a)  All
  - b)  Some\*
  - c)  None of the:
  1.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 07/751,951.
  3.  Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\*Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_

5.  Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application. **THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE FOR SUBMITTING NEW FORMAL DRAWINGS, OR A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION. This three-month period for complying with the REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL is extendable under 37 CFR 1.136(a).**

6.  Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION IS REQUIRED.
7.  Applicant MUST submit NEW FORMAL DRAWINGS
  - (a)  including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached 1)  hereto or 2)  to Paper No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (b)  including changes required by the proposed drawing correction filed \_\_\_\_\_, which has been approved by the examiner.
  - (c)  including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment/Comment or in the Office action of Paper No. \_\_\_\_\_.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings. The drawings should be filed as a separate paper with a transmittal letter addressed to the Official Draftsperson.

8.  Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Any reply to this letter should include, in the upper right hand corner, the APPLICATION NUMBER (SERIES CODE/SERIAL NUMBER). If applicant has received a Notice of Allowance and Issue Fee Due, the ISSUE BATCH NUMBER and DATE of the NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE should also be included.

### Attachment(s)

1 <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	2 <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
3 <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	4 <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No. _____.
5 <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449), Paper No(s). _____	6 <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment
7 <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material	8 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9 <input type="checkbox"/> Other	

## REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

1. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the claimed substrate processing method with the features:

*an atmospheric loader, having a location for positioning at least one cassette containing the substrates, the location having an upper region which is open to a cassette transferring path; or*

*placing a cassette containing at least one wafer to be processed, at a cassette table, the cassette table having an upper region there over which is open to a cassette transferring path; or*

*placing a cassette, containing a sample, at a position in front of a front wall of a lock chamber, in which one sample is to be disposed, on a cassette table, the cassette being set at a position where an upper region thereof is open to a wafer storing structure transfer path* along with other claimed features in each of the independent claims is not found in the prior art either singly or in combination.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

2. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communication from the examiner should be directed to Steve Gravini whose telephone number is (703) 308-7570 and electronic transmission / e-mail address is "steve.gravini@uspto.gov". **If applicant(s) chose to send information be e-mail, please be aware that confidentiality of the electronically transmitted message cannot be assured.** Please see MPEP 502.02.

*Steve Gravini*  
**STEPHEN GRAVINI**  
**PRIMARY EXAMINER**